

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 were pending in this application. By way of this amendment and reply to the Office Action mailed July 30, 2002, claims 1, 2, 11 and 12 have been amended to more clearly describe the present invention. Therefore, claims 1-16 are presently pending for further consideration on the merits.

It is respectfully requested that this after-final amendment and reply be considered and entered, since it is believed to place the application in condition for allowance.

As an initial matter, it is requested that the Examiner acknowledge Applicant's claim for foreign priority, in accordance with Applicant's submission of a Claim for Foreign Priority filed on January 20, 1999. It is noted that the first Office Action (mailed March 21, 2002) indicated on the Office Action Summary that "Certified copies of the priority documents have been received", but the Office Action Summary did not indicate that a claim for priority was made.

In the Office Action, claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,557,659 to Hyde-Thompson. This rejection, to the extent that it may be applied to the presently pending claims, is traversed for at least the reasons given below.

The present invention is directed to a system and a method for allowing a user to receive a voice message from a telephone, and to respond to the phone message via an e-mail that also corresponds to the sender of the voice message.

With respect to column 18, lines 50-52 of Hyde-Thompson, the single directory contains a plurality of e-mail addresses and extension numbers, whereby the single directory is used to send an e-mail attachment of a voice message (that has been digitized into a digital voice file) to a recipient's e-mail address, in the case where the recipient's phone has been forwarded to a voice message system. See also column 13, lines 13-27 of Hyde-Thompson. Thus, in Hyde-Thompson, a table is used to determine a proper e-mail address of a recipient of a telephone message, and it is not used to determine a proper e-mail

see item 1601 and 1608 of Fig. 16

address of a sender of a voice mail. More particularly, in the present invention, an identifier identifies a sender number corresponding to a sender that has sent a digitized voice, and the digitized voice is stored at a particular memory address of a memory that is assigned to the sender, based on the identification of the sender number as performed by the identifier. Furthermore, in the present invention, a table (containing sender numbers and corresponding e-mail addresses) is accessed to allow a receiver of the digitized voice to send an e-mail to the corresponding e-mail address of the sender.

In Hyde-Thompson, a receiver of a voice message is provided with an e-mail of that voice message, whereby that voice message is capable of being played back of the telephone of the recipient. While Figure 10 and Figure 16 of Hyde-Thompson allow a recipient of a voice message to reply to the sender during message playback, they do not teach or suggest the storing of digitized voice at a particular memory address that is assigned to the sender within a memory, based on an identification of the sender number as performed by an identifier, in which a table is accessed to allow a receiver of the digitized voice to send an e-mail response to the corresponding e-mail address of the sender.

claim 3, 4

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Rather, referring to column 13, lines 29-31 of Hyde-Thompson, it appears that the determination as to whether or not a sender is known is based on whether or not the sender corresponds to the same PBX as the recipient, and whereby senders from other PBXs would not be known. In those instances in which the sender is from another PBX, the user must provide the sender's mailbox information in order to respond via e-mail to the sender. Such a feature that requires a user to enter in information in order to reply to a voice message does not exist in the present invention, which is able to obtain the sender number corresponding to the sender by way of an identifier.

Therefore, for the reasons stated above, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper, or if a petition for extension of time is required for timely acceptance of same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 19-0741 for any such fees; and applicant(s) hereby petition for any needed extension of time.

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**Marked-up Claims:**

1. (Twice Amended) A voice mail apparatus comprising:
a memory to store received digitized voice from a sender;
an identifier to identify a sender number attached to the digitized voice, the sender number corresponding to the sender that has sent the digitized voice; and
a table that provides a correspondence between a plurality of e-mail addresses and a plurality of sender numbers, respectively,
wherein the [identifier performs an identification of the sender number based on] digitized voice is stored at a particular memory address that is assigned to the sender within the memory [in which the digitized voice is stored], based on the identification of the sender number as performed by the identifier, and
wherein the table is accessed to allow a recipient of the digitized voice to send an e-mail response to the corresponding e-mail address of the sender.

2. (Twice Amended) A voice mail apparatus comprising:
a memory to store received digitized voice from a sender;
an identifier to identify a proper sender number [of] attached to the digitized voice, the sender number corresponding to the sender that has sent the digitized voice; and
a table that provides a correspondence between a plurality of e-mail addresses and a plurality of proper sender numbers, respectively,
wherein the [identifier performs an identification of the proper sender number based on] digitized voice is stored at a particular memory address that is assigned to the sender within the memory [in which the digitized voice is stored], based on the identification of the sender number as performed by the identifier, and
wherein the table is accessed to allow a recipient of the digitized voice to send an e-mail response to the corresponding e-mail address of the sender.

11. (Twice Amended) A method of processing voice mail comprising the steps of:

storing, in a memory, a digitized voice sent from a sender;

identifying [a] the sender of the digitized voice upon obtaining the digitized voice from [a] the memory, the identifying being performed based on a [memory address within the memory in which] sender number corresponding to the sender that is attached to the digitized voice [is stored]; [and]

storing, based on the sender number, the digital voice at a particular memory address within the memory, the particular memory address being assigned to the sender; and

performing retrieval of a table to find an e-mail address of the sender so as to allow a recipient of the digitized voice to respond to the sender, the retrieval being based on the sender number,

wherein the table provides a correspondence between a plurality of e-mail addresses and a plurality of sender numbers.

12. (Twice Amended) A method of processing voice mail comprising the steps of:

storing, in a memory, a digitized voice sent from a sender;

identifying [a proper number of a] the sender of the digitized voice upon obtaining the digitized voice from [a] the memory, the identifying being performed based on a [memory address within the memory in which] proper number corresponding to the sender that is attached to the digitized voice [is stored]; [and]

storing, based on the proper number, the digital voice at a particular memory address within the memory, the particular memory address being assigned to the sender; and

performing retrieval of a table to find an e-mail address corresponding to the proper number so as to allow a recipient of the digitized voice to respond to the sender, the retrieval being based on the sender number,

wherein the table provides a correspondence between a plurality of e-mail addresses and a plurality of proper numbers.